

be a year of transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, that we need a responsible redeployment of U.S. forces, that we need to promote Iraqi political compromise to unite the country, encourage our allies to play a constructive role, hold the Bush administration accountable. And there is one more thing that we must do that I know my colleagues and I agree completely on. And that is to make sure that our troops continue to have everything they need, because despite the fact that al-Zarqawi has been removed, there are going to be other al-Zarqawis in the world. There are going to be others who enjoy beheadings and car bombings. And for as long as they exist, we are going to need the capabilities of meeting and defeating them.

That is why I was so distressed when my constituents woke up this morning to this front page in our Long Island newspaper, *Newsday*. The front page headline, "Blood clot bandages, frontline shortage, some troops calling home to ask for life saving dressings."

By the way, I would say to my friends from Georgia and California, this story is under a story about how Ann Coulter visited my district having just attacked 9/11 widows as being witches and harpies. After Ann Coulter attacked 9/11 widows, I have about a hundred of them in my district, comes to my district and attacks them. Under that story is this story about potential shortages of blood clot bandages.

Let me share with my colleagues what this story says. "Despite Army order that frontline medics get special clotting bandages, soldiers say they're still needed." It begins with this lead. "Nine months after an Army order that all combat orders would get life saving clotting bandages to curb bleeding deaths, some troops in Iraq are still calling home, asking friends and families to supply them. Despite Army assurances that there are plenty of bandages to go around. Soldiers have written to say they have not found their way to all those on the front lines, and the manufacturer under contract with the Army acknowledged last week that early production problems may have spurred a shortage."

Now, let me be clear on this. We have been working with the Army and we will continue to work closely with them. They are trying to get to the bottom of this and that is their obligation. I appreciate their responsiveness to this report. But we cannot afford continued reports like this three years after the invasion.

It is unfair that Ms. Doreen Kenny, who lost her job, Jacob Fletcher, in Iraq, one of the first Long Islanders to be killed in action, has to have her photograph in this story with the quote, "If I can prevent one knock at the door of a military family, I will do all I can to prevent them from living through the heartbreak I have had to live through."

Why is she in this story? Because Doreen Kenny, who lost her boy, is mail-

ing this critical medical equipment to our troops in Iraq. That is not what she should be having to do right now.

So I know we will continue as Democrats to ensure that when we go to war we do not go with the Army we have, as Secretary Rumsfeld said, but with the supplies they need. That those of us who believe that we have to draw a line against totalitarianism understand that we have to make sure our supply lines are adequately equipped. That we cannot afford to send soldiers into hostility and then read reports that they are calling home asking for blood clotting bandages.

I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership. We will continue to pursue this vitally important plan for Iraq, but I know that at the centerpiece of those plans is the understanding that we have to protect the protectors and defend the defenders, and that is what Democrats are doing in the United States Congress today.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for sharing the experience of your constituent. I think each of us has sat down with troops returning from Iraq and heard the stories of the lack of lifesaving equipment that they have had to cope with. I had lunch with a guardsman from my district a couple of weeks ago who told me during the year he was in Iraq, the Humvees they were riding in had no doors, and they had to jerry-rig sheets of plywood separated by sacks of sand or concrete, what we call hillbilly armor, to protect themselves as they went from base to base, asking each other, why are we having to do this?

And when we consider all of the misspent and unaccounted for billions of reconstruction dollars and how many coagulant bandages that would pay for or body armor or uparmored vehicles, I think it is the case of going to war with the leadership you have, not the leadership you would like. And I thank the gentleman. If the gentleman has time, we can have a colloquy later on but let me turn to my other colleague from Georgia, Mr. SCOTT, one of our great leaders on national security issues, and I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you so much and to my good friend, Mr. ISRAEL. What a pleasure it is to serve, the three of us, as co-chairs of our Democratic Group on National Security and providing leadership for this Nation on this critical area, and also letting the American people know that Democrats stand, foremost, for national security. Our history, our legacy speaks to that.

As we have counted time and time again, every time we have had a national crisis, Democrats have paved the way and brought us through, from Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Harry Truman, John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Who could be more strong than at the Bay of Pigs, at the missile crisis in Cuba, with the Soviet Union in the Cold War. We have been in the forefront in every aspect of protecting this

country and we are at the forefront now.

It is such a pleasure and I am just very proud to be here with you. I want to pick up on that theme because while we all salute the killing of al-Zarqawi, we are proud of that, we are proud of our military.

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We salute them for having done a remarkable job, but I think it is very important for us not to get too caught up in that as much as it is very important for us to look at this Iraq situation from the standpoint of the soldier, from that person that is on the front lines.

Like the two of you, I have been to Iraq. I have been over into the war zone twice. I have been into the European theater. I have been into Afghanistan. I have been on the front lines with our troops. I have eaten with them. I have been there and I have talked with them, and I have looked them in the eyes and they have looked me in the eyes. We have been able to see and to be able to feel one another's passion and their pain.

I am committed, as the two of you are, to make sure that we speak for the soldier, and this is what I want to do this evening. I want to talk about our military, and I want to talk about them from the standpoint of the sacrifices that our men and women in uniform are making.

Most recently, we had in the news the disturbing story about the marines and about what happened over there, but I want you to know that this is one soldier here, this is one congressman, who is going to not come to any conclusions, because no matter what the situation is on that battlefield, where our marines, where our soldiers are, they did not choose to go over there. They did not choose to go over there with bad equipment, undermanned and in the rotation cycle that they have that has put tremendous strain on our military.

Many of our marines, many of our soldiers, are over there not on their second tour, not even on their third tour. Some are on their fourth tour of duty. I talked with them. That is not right, and it is not fair.

I think as we talk tonight we need to talk about the strain that this Iraqi situation is placing on our military so that when we judge our military, let us judge them right. Let us judge them with the hills and valleys and the mountains that they have got to go through over there.

I want to talk about just for a second that nearly all of the available combat units in the United States, Army and the Army National Guard and the Marine Corps, have been used up in the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Every available combat brigade from the active duty Army has already been to Afghanistan and Iraq at least once for a 12-month tour. Many are now in